



THE BUFFALO BILL STORIES

A WEEKLY PUBLICATION
DEVOTED TO BORDER HISTORY

Issued Weekly. By Subscription \$2.50 per year. Entered as Second Class Matter at New York Post Office by STREET & SMITH, 238 William St., N. Y.

No. 20.

Price, Five Cents.



"HANDS UP OR DIE!" CRIED BUFFALO BILL STERNLY, AS A BULLET FROM HIS REVOLVER SEVERED THE ROPE AROUND LIEUT. DANFORTH'S NECK.—(CHAPTER VIII.)



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BUFFALO BILL'S VICTORIES.

By the author of "BUFFALO BILL."

CHAPTER I.

THE LOST TROOPERS.

"Danforth, our situation is desperate, though I would not have the men think so as long as we have the slightest ray of hope."

"I feel as you do, Captain Ames, and think that a strange fatality has dogged our steps ever since we were sent on this ill-omened expedition, for so it seems, now that the last of our three scouts has been killed."

"But we must make another effort to find our way out of this valley of death, for it is nothing more."

The two who thus spoke were officers of the United States army, clad in the fatigue suit of the cavalry, and with the appearance of having been long in the saddle and seen hard service.

Near them were half a hundred troopers, some forty mounted infantry and artillery men who formed the crew of two light guns. Then there were pack animals, a couple of ambulances and a score of led horses.

Both men and horses seemed worn out and discour-

aged, for they were camped in a grassless, treeless, waterless country of rock and sand. About them towered rocky ranges on every side, forming a basin so desolate, so dreary, that no vegetation grew there, for they were in one of those desert valleys of Arizona, surrounded by ranges of volcanic mountains.

In the night they had been led into the valley by their guide, by a wild and rugged way, where even the artillery and caisson wheels left no trail, and then suddenly, in the darkness, had come a whining sound, a thud, a cry, and the last of the three scouts who had started with the expedition had toppled over, a dying man, with an arrow sticking deep in his body.

A score of carbines had flashed to avenge him, but not a sound had followed the discharge, and who had been the silent slayer of the guide no one knew.

"Push straight ahead from here as the crow flies—do not swerve either to the right or left, or you are lost. Ten miles away is a pass out of this valley, with grass, wood and water beyond—stay here and you die——"

The voice of the dying guide had sunk to a whisper; he uttered a few words more, that were not understood, and he was dead.

Captain Ames, the commandant of the expedition, determined to obey the last words of the scout; so, bearing his body, they pushed on. They rode as straight ahead as they could, and after several hours reached the other side of the valley. But there was an unbroken wall, and no pass could be found. The command halted, and the men went on foot in search of the pass.

Suddenly there was a cry off under the cliffs. Men rushed there, and a soldier was found lying dead, an arrow in his throat. The men were called together, and camped in a circle around the horses and guns.

The men had a cold supper and water in their canteens, but the horses had neither grass nor water to drink, so it was a long and dreary night for them. Morning dawned, and then the soldiers could see that they were in a desert valley, with not a tree, blade of grass, shrub or water near.

And it was seen, too, that another of their number had fallen—a sentinel, who lay upon his post, an arrow in his brain. The same, silent, unseen and mysterious foe who had dogged them for two nights and a day had brought down another victim—the three scouts first, then the two soldiers, making five in all. Search was at once made for the pass leading out of the valley, but nowhere could a break be found in the walls of rock.

And in the hard, flinty soil a grave could not even be dug for the dead, and so the bodies were taken along until they could be buried.

Around the death valley, close to the base of the rocky range, the command slowly marched, searching for an opening. But in vain did they enter cañon after cañon, for there was no outlet, and they were compelled to return.

The sun beat down upon them with relentless fury, but still they pushed on. At last it was decided to recross the valley and leave it where they had entered. But though they recrossed to the spot where they thought the guide

had led them into the valley, they could not find any break where they could get out.

Strapped to a caisson, the guide's dead lips were forever sealed, and they could only struggle on and hope for success at last. The horses, without water or food, were well-nigh used up; in fact, two of the animals had fallen by the way.

At last, late in the afternoon, a halt was made, and Captain Ames had spoken the words to Lieutenant Danforth of the artillery that open this story. After conversing together a few minutes, the two infantry officers and the lieutenant commanding the troopers were called into council with Lieutenant Danforth and Captain Ames, and their really desperate situation was discussed.

Long and earnestly the six officers talked together, and then it was decided to divide the command in two, each party starting out again to search for a pass, the one to the right and the other to the left, and to keep on until night, go into camp, and continue on in the morning until they met again. Each party was to take one of the light guns, and, if a pass was found, it was to be fired as a signal, and to continue firing until the other gun answered it.

So they started, and halted only at nightfall. With the dawn they again moved on, horses and men nearly used up now, but struggling on, until they again met, many miles from their starting point. But they had found no exit from the "fatal valley."

CHAPTER II.

THE MYSTERIOUS GUIDE.

The situation was, indeed, a desperate one for the soldiers. They had been sent out from Fort Way to establish an advance post still further west into the Indian country. The scouts, who were also the guides, and knew the country, were known to be competent men, and had led Captain Ames to several situations that were good for an outpost; but, under his orders, he desired to push still further into the land of danger, and secure a position where he could live on the surrounding country,

where timber would be plentiful and the grass and water in abundance, while the natural means of defense would also be all that was required.

With this aim in view, the guides had pushed on toward a country lying beyond the desert lands, and which one of the number knew, and told how the nearest trail led through a valley that was shunned by all Indians and palefaces alike.

To cross the valley—and the guide referred to knew the trail—would save a ride of forty or fifty miles, and so the march was taken up, with the result that in the night camp, before entering the desert trail, two of the scouts had been slain, and the third also became a victim, after leading the soldiers into the fatal valley of death.

Thus it was that Captain Ames found his little command with death staring them in the face, unless they deserted their horses, guns, packs and supplies, and climbed over the rocky ridge to make their way on foot over the hundred miles to the fort. With a sad heart Captain Ames was about to give the order to his men to take what provisions they could, and, deserting their faithful horses, to prepare for the hard and dangerous climb over the lofty range, when Lieutenant Danforth, who was sweeping the valley with his glass, called out, in a voice that startled all:

"There comes a horseman!"

Every eye was at once centered upon the object that had caught the lieutenant's eye, and all beheld, several miles away over the barren plain, a horse and rider. The animal was coming along at an easy lope, and his trail would bring him directly to the camp.

Officers and men were all excited now, and the horses pricked up their ears and gazed upon the coming horseman, for their instinct seemed to tell them that help was at hand. Nearer and nearer he came, and the glasses of the officers were leveled upon him, and they saw that he rode a fine roan horse that had not the weary, gaunt look of their animals; that his equipments were a handsome Mexican saddle and bridle, and the rider rode with the ease of a perfect horseman. As he drew nearer it was

seen that he was a young man, attired in a hunting shirt, buckskin leggings and top boots, and wearing a sombrero. His form was tall, graceful and sinewy, and his face was handsome, bold, and darkly bronzed. About his waist was a belt of arms, and a repeating rifle was hung to his saddle horn.

As he came up, the men, feeling that they saw in him a rescuer, greeted him with a cheer, to which he responded by raising his sombrero courteously, while he halted just before Captain Ames and said:

"Are you in command of this party, sir?"

"I am, sir," responded Captain Ames.

"May I suggest that you put the man who guided you here at once under arrest?"

"That is impossible, sir, as he is dead."

"You discovered his treachery, then, and shot him?"

"No; our guide, Arizona Al, was not a traitor," responded the captain, somewhat warmly.

"Arizona Al was your guide, then, sir?"

"Yes."

"I knew him well, and I will also assert that he was no traitor, though why he should have guided you here I am at a loss to understand."

"We were going to seek a situation for an advance post, which, he said, lay to the west of this desert basin, and he was guiding us through it when he was killed by an Indian in ambush, who shot him with an arrow. Dying, he told us how to get out of here, but I confess that we are lost, and were just about to desert our horses when we discovered you coming toward us."

The explanation of Captain Ames seemed to impress the stranger, for he listened with deepest interest and attention, and for fully a minute made no reply. Then he asked:

"Where is the body of your guide?"

Captain Ames pointed to the ambulance and said:

"In that ambulance, with the bodies of two soldiers, who were shot in the same silent and mysterious way, while I may add that two more scouts were killed from ambush by Indians as we neared the valley."

The stranger dismounted, walked toward the ambulance, glanced at the bodies of the soldiers, but looked earnestly at that of the guide.

"Poor Arizona Al!" he said, feelingly, and then asked, quickly:

"Have you the arrows that killed these men?"

A sergeant brought them to him, stating that he had kept them.

"These are not Indian arrows, nor did any redskin fire them."

"Who else could have done so, sir?" asked Captain Ames.

"White men," was the quiet response.

"I did not know there were any white men in this country."

Without heeding the remark of Captain Ames, the stranger said:

"Here, sir, only death can overtake you, so I will carry out Arizona Al's intention, and guide you to safety, for I see that men and horses are suffering greatly for water."

CHAPTER III.

THE UNKNOWN.

Captain Ames once more gave orders for the command to get ready to move, and the men sprang as quickly as they could to obey, giving a faint cheer of delight, for their parched throats would not allow a good, old-time hurrah.

"Now, sir, may I ask who it is that has so kindly come to my rescue?" asked Captain Ames, as he mounted his horse and rode alongside of the guide.

"Simply call me guide," came the surprising reply.

"You must know this country, to be found here alone. So, may I ask if you belong to any of the frontier posts?" asked Captain Ames, slightly nettled by the man's refusing his name.

"I do not, sir."

"Then what else can bring you to this wild country?"

"Love of a roving life and adventure, sir."

"Can it be that you are alone here?"

"I have two companions, sir, to share my self-enforced exile."

"And three men dare roam this Indian-infested country?"

"Under some circumstances; yes, sir."

"Under what circumstances, I should like to know?" and the officer eyed the stranger guide earnestly.

"The command is ready to move, sir, so I will take my place in the lead," replied the stranger, and he gave a military salute and rode to the front, as though anxious to escape further questioning.

Captain Ames did not like the mysterious manner of the volunteer guide, and beckoned to Lieutenant Danforth to come and ride with him.

"What do you make of that man, Danforth?" he asked as the command started upon the march.

"He is as handsome as a picture, rides superbly, and is a gentleman, or was born one, whatever he may be now."

"That is just it—whatever he may be now."

"Did he not tell you?"

"He said to call him simply guide. He also told me he was out in this wild country from a love of adventure and had two companions with him."

"Strange!"

"Yes; and he is not from any of the posts or settlements, he said."

"He is a mystery, indeed. But how quickly he told you that those arrows were not fired by Indians."

"Yes; in some way, he very quickly discovered the fact."

"And where is he now taking you?"

"I simply asked him to guide us out of this fatal valley."

"To the westward, or to return the way we came?"

"I suggested no way, other than to get us to water and grass as soon as possible; but he is going to the westward."

"Yes."

"We will ride ahead and talk with him."

With this the two officers rode more rapidly, and soon came up with the mysterious guide. He was following no trail, going straight on as the crow flies, and apparently knowing just what he was about.

Some three miles ahead the wall of rocks rose like an impassible barrier, for so the command had found it; but the man was aiming straight toward the cliff. As they rode up, Captain Ames said:

"Guide, where are you taking us?"

"First, out of this death valley, sir."

"That is well; but we have been along the base of yonder cliffs, and could find no pass through them."

"There is one, however, sir, and a fairly good one."

"That wheels can pass over?"

"Yes, sir; you can carry guns and ambulances."

"It is remarkable that we could not find the way."

"Not when you see what a blind trail it is, sir."

"And when out of this valley, which way?"

"First to a good camping-place for water and grass."

"Why did you not take us to the east, back to the fort?"

"Because this is the quickest way for safety, sir."

"How do you mean 'for safety,' guide?"

For a moment the man made no reply, but then he said:

"Captain Ames, Arizona Al knew this valley, and led you into it, intending to find a good position beyond for a post; but he did not know the country west of here as I do, nor did he know that you are in the midst of a very dangerous uprising of the Navahoe Indians."

"Can this be possible?"

"It is true, sir, as I know. You have found a secret foe upon your track since you came near this valley. It was supposed by that foe that you were out on a scouting expedition only, intending to return soon to the fort, and every trail leading back is guarded by a large force of Indians to ambush you."

"Knowing this, and aware that palefaces are your deadliest foes, and are prompting the Indian uprising, I will guide you from here to an old fort, one that had a

sad and weird record, but which is, nevertheless, strong and comfortable, and with good water, grass and woodland at hand, something not often found together in this part of Arizona."

"I have never heard of a fort being placed in this country, guide."

"True, sir, for none of those who built it lived to tell the story; but you have heard of the massacre of Major Wheeler's command, some years ago?"

"Oh, yes; he and nearly a hundred men."

"Yes, sir; they were driven out here by redskins, and built that fort, hoping relief would come. None came, provisions gave out, they were daily attacked by Indians, who could not carry the fort; but at last, to keep from starving, they were compelled to march out, in an attempt to get back to the post from whence they had started. They were to leave early in the night, and try to escape through the Indian lines; but the moment the gates were opened, the redskins, who were watching, rushed in on them, and the massacre of all but one man followed, and he was captured by the Navahoese."

"I remember the sad story well; but it was not known that any one escaped the massacre."

"One man did, Captain Ames."

"And where is he now?"

"He is roving about the country somewhere, sir."

"And it is to this old fort you would lead us?"

"It is, sir; as soon as you have camped where there is water and grass; but here we are at the cliffs." And he rode on slightly in advance, and turned into what appeared to be a mere break in the rocky wall, but which was a way, though a rough one, to a cañon some twenty feet above, and where horses and guns could continue out through the death valley.

Once in the range beyond, and there was a pretty valley found, with water, wood and grass in abundance, and here a camp was made, men and horses reveling in the change from the desert vale they had just left.

After an hour's halt, the guide led them on into a wild country beyond, and though following no trail, he at last

brought them to the ill-fated fort where, years before, so many brave soldiers had lost their lives.

It was situated upon the top of a barren hill, but strongly built, of heavy logs, stood on end to form a wall, and with a log cabin at either end to form a stronghold. Only a couple of hundred feet wide, it extended twice that distance in length, the center being used as a corral for horses.

There were springs of pure water there, bubbling up from the rocks, and all about the fort outside grass grew luxuriantly. But whitened human bones scattered all about, and unburied, showed what had been the fate of those who had been there before them.

"Here you will be safe, sir, for, if attacked, you can keep ten times your force at bay, and attacked you certainly will be.

"Remain here until I return to guide you out, for it will be certain death to leave.

"I will return as soon as I can."

And, with a salute, the guide sprang into his saddle and rode away. The moment he had disappeared from sight, Captain Ames said:

"It was a mistake to let him go, for though he led us here, we know nothing about him—he is still unknown."

"Captain Ames, I think I know that man, sir," said a sergeant who overheard the last remark.

"Then tell us who he is, sergeant," quickly said the captain.

"You have heard of a great scout they call Buffalo Bill, sir?"

"Yes, indeed; the great scout of the far Northwest; but he would not be down in Arizona, sergeant."

"He might be, sir; but I saw Buffalo Bill once, two years ago, and if he is not that man, then he is his double, sir."

"But why would Buffalo Bill, as a United States army scout, refuse to make himself known?"

This seemed to stagger the sergeant, who could only reply:

"I do not know, sir; but it is either Buffalo Bill or his

double. Seen once, sir, Buffalo Bill is not one to forget."

"Sergeant, go among the men and find out if any one else ever met Buffalo Bill."

The sergeant obeyed, but could find no other man who had ever met the great army scout of the Northwestern frontier.

CHAPTER IV.

THE FATAL BLACK ARROW.

Captain Ames at once set about making his command at home in the Fort of Ill Omen, as the men called it, though it had promptly been re-christened Fort Dare, the name which the department commander had ordered it to be called.

With one of his guns mounted at each end of the stockade, to command the surrounding country, the infantry force divided to support the artillery, and the cavalry stationed in the center of the corral, Captain Ames felt strong enough to beat off a large force, should he be attacked, as he half-expected would be the case.

The springs among the rocks furnished an abundant supply of water, the valleys around the fort were carpeted with juicy grass, and the supply of stores and ammunition were sufficient to last a couple of weeks. So it was that the little garrison settled down to the routine of daily life in a frontier fort.

Several days passed before Captain Ames decided that the men and horses were sufficiently recuperated after their march and suffering in the Death Valley to send a party to the main fort with dispatches containing his report and asking for supplies.

He knew that without a guide he would have trouble in finding the way, for the Death Valley must be flanked, and they continue on around to the trail left on the outward march.

Lieutenant Horace Latimer, of the cavalry, with a corporal and eight men, were selected for the trip, the most experienced frontiersmen of the command being picked out for the long and dangerous trail. With farewells

from all, they started upon their way, Lieutenant Latimer calling out:

"Have no fear for us, for within a week we will be back with supplies and reinforcements."

But that night a sentinel on his post was seen to fall backward to the ground, and an arrow was found sticking in his heart. The next day, one of the soldiers, guarding the horses feeding in the valley, was killed from an ambush by an unseen foe, and no trace of the slayer could be found. At night, seated in the fort about the camp fire, the officers were discussing the secret foe that haunted them at Fort Dare, when an arrow whizzed through the air and Captain Ames was wounded in the shoulder, though slightly.

"It is a black arrow, the same as those that were fatal to the others. I am more fortunate than they were, poor fellows," calmly said Captain Ames, as he drew the arrow from his shoulder, and turned to Surgeon Marsden to dress the wound.

Guards were at once doubled, though kept hidden, and every precaution was taken to prevent another deathblow from the fatal black arrows. But, try as they might, the unseen foe did his fatal work, for each day and night had a victim of the fatal black arrow, a soldier being either killed or wounded.

The week passed away, and Lieutenant Latimer and his reinforcements did not arrive. Nor did the unknown guide return as he had promised to do. The supplies were running low, and the deeds of the unseen slayers had caused the men to grow anxious, and to feel that the post was well named when they called it Fort Ill Omen.

Captain Ames decided that there was but one thing for him to do, and that was to retreat from the newly-established post back to the fort from which he had started. The officers, all called in council, decided that this was all that there was to do, for harm might have befallen Lieutenant Latimer, and there were just supplies enough left to last the command back to the fort.

So orders were given to prepare for an early start the following morning, and the men made the old fort ring

with their cheers of joy, and began to make their preparations for departure while the light of day yet lingered, for the sun was near its setting. But suddenly a call came from the sentry on the eastern end of the stockade, and he reported to Captain Ames that a horseman was coming at full speed across the valley, but yet miles away.

Captain Ames and his officers, under the excitement of the news, went to the stockade gate, while the men crowded the walls, some of them leaping over outside. The horseman was now visible to all, and Captain Ames, through his glass, saw that it was not, as many had supposed, their unknown rescuer from the Death Valley.

Instead, he appeared to be a mere youth, his face as darkly bronzed almost as an Indian, his jet-black hair was worn long, hanging in wavy manes upon his shoulders, while his costume was half plainsman, half Mexican and picturesque with gaudy colors. Every eye was upon him, and it could be seen that his horse had been hard ridden, and was urged on like the wind while, as he waved his hand upon nearing the fort, the soldiers greeted him with welcoming cheers, though none could guess what his mission was.

CHAPTER V.

THE MESSENGER.

Up to the stockade dashed the messenger, halting suddenly before the group of officers, and doffing his sombrero and holding it in his hand. Before Captain Ames could speak, and while all eyes were turned upon the darkly-bronzed, handsome face, he said:

"I am here to inform Captain Ames, the commandant of this post, that the officer and men sent to Fort Way for reinforcements and supplies, were ambushed by the Navahoes, forty miles from here, and either killed instantly or captured."

"When was this?" asked Captain Ames, gazing earnestly into the face of the youth who brought such sad tidings.

"It was two days ago, sir."

"Where?"

"Just where they joined your trail at your camp before entering Death Valley."

"How do you know this?"

"I saw it, sir."

"Could you not have warned them?"

"I tried to do so, sir, but was watching the Indians from the cliffs surrounding Death Valley, and had no idea that there were palefaces near until I saw the redskins suddenly burst cover, and soon after the officer and nine men, as I counted them, rode directly into the ambush prepared for them, and in the firing that followed, and the dashing out upon them of the braves, I lost sight of them."

"Could they not cut their way through?"

"They evidently made the attempt, sir, from their movements, but found it impossible."

"Nearly a dozen soldiers, led by a gallant officer as Lieutenant Latimer was, should have cut his way through half a hundred or more Indians."

"True, sir, but they had half a thousand or more to deal with."

"So many?"

"Yes, sir."

"I did not believe the Navahoes could bring more than that number into battle from their whole village."

"You have been misinformed, sir, for the Navahoes have three villages, situated within a hundred miles of this fort, and some twenty-five miles apart, and well located for defense, while they can put in the saddle fifteen hundred braves within a couple of days' notice, and I believe their whole force is now on the move."

"For what purpose? The scouts at Fort Way made no such reports before our leaving."

"You are invading a country, sir, which certain persons are determined to keep soldiers and settlers out of, and their influence has aroused the Navahoes to strike a blow at you, such as was visited upon Major Wheeler and his command a few years ago at this very ill-fated fort."

"Do you mean that my coming into this country has caused the Navahoes to go upon the warpath against me?"

"Yes, sir; that is it."

"And where are they now?"

"A part of their force is crossing Death Valley, to prevent your retreat by that way, another force is flanking the valley to the south, a third to the north, so that your every retreat is cut off, and should you push still further westward, you would be driven into the Moqui country and annihilated."

"I intended to retreat to Fort W—— at dawn."

"It will be sure death to do so, sir. Remain here until help comes."

"But help will not come if Lieutenant Latimer and his men are killed or captured."

"Pardon me, sir, but there has been one who got through to the fort, and help is now on the way to you."

"Ah! who is this one you speak of?"

"One who knows the situation most thoroughly is aware of the assembling of the Navahoes, and the importance of bringing to your aid a force large enough to beat them back, while he also knows well the nearest trails to lead them by."

"To whom do you refer?"

"To the guide who brought you here, sir."

"Who is he?"

"A plainsman, sir."

"Have you seen him lately?"

"He it was, sir, who put me on the watch of the Navahoes, while he went on to Fort Way for help. He told me to see what their intention was, and ride with all speed to this fort to warn you to be on your guard, and to hold out against all odds until he brought help."

"What is that man's name?"

"We call him chief, sir."

"You are one of his comrades, then?"

"Yes, sir."

"He has another companion?"

"Yes, sir."

"Where is he?"

"In our camp, sir."

Captain Ames was puzzled. He dare not doubt the news brought him by the strange messenger, and yet how was it that the mysterious guide and one other could dwell alone in the midst of the Indian country and not be upon friendly terms with them? Who, also, were the ones that he hinted at as having urged the Navahoes to attack Fort Dare and wipe his command out, as had been the case with Major Wheeler's expedition?

"You could not guide us by a trail that would enable us to elude the redskins?" he asked.

"I might, sir, but the chances would be desperate with so large a force, though half-a-dozen I could guide in safety. The redskins have sent their scouts ahead, sir, and will surely attack you at dawn, so be ready for them, as you have no scouts to report their movements. Within twenty-four hours relief should come to you."

"Who is it that you hint that urged the Navahoes to attack us?"

"Men who have nothing to lose, everything to gain, sir."

"And who are you, let me ask?"

"A half-breed, sir," was the calm reply. Then he continued, hastily: "I have warned you, sir, as I was told to do, and the Indians must not see me here, for half of the battle will be to surprise them when they expect to surprise you. I shall see the guide and tell him the force of redskins, and that you are prepared to fight them back, but to hasten on with the command. Good-evening, sir," and with a bound his horse was away like an arrow, the rider unheeding the call of Captain Ames to him to halt, and his sudden going surprised officers and men.

CHAPTER VI.

THE MIDNIGHT VISITOR.

"Well, more mystery, gentlemen," said Captain Ames, as he saw the young messenger disappear in the distance, riding like the wind.

"He gave us good advice and timely warning, though

he was, indeed, like the guide, mysterious," Lieutenant Danforth replied.

"Yes, and from what he said of the guide, he appears to be all right; but how sad a report he brings of poor Latimer and his men."

"Sad, indeed, Captain Ames, though I hope that the doubt as to the death or captivity he expressed may give us hope they are prisoners, and can be rescued. If you deem it best, though he did not give any encouragement of rescue, I am willing to try and get through toward Fort Way for help."

"Well said, Danforth, and just like you, though you are about the last man I would allow to be sacrificed."

"Why so?" asked the handsome lieutenant, apparently surprised at the words of Captain Ames.

"In the first place, you are my adjutant, aide-de-camp and adviser, and one of the best officers on the frontier."

"You are very complimentary, Captain Ames."

"And truthful as well. But, in the second place, you are very rich, have a chance for rapid promotion for your gallant deeds, and are engaged to be married to Colonel Belden's ward, Miss Grace Soulsby, one of the loveliest girls in army circles, and I am a good judge, too, of female loveliness, if I am a bachelor.

"No, if harm befell you, and Miss Soulsby came in a few weeks, she would never forgive me for allowing you to sacrifice yourself, even in the discharge of duty."

The face of Frank Danforth had grown very serious now, and he replied:

"Ames, you are about the best friend I have, and some day I may tell you a secret, but not now. It is true that Miss Grace Soulsby is engaged to me, and is coming to Fort Way in a few weeks to become my wife, but I have a foreboding that she will never be Mrs. Danforth—that we will never be married.

"But now what can I do to get all ready for defense, for I believe all that that young fellow told us?"

"So do I. We will keep a third of the men on duty at a time, and have all ready for a desperate fight, and I have strong confidence in our fort here.

"We are down to short rations, and must shorten them still more, for it will not do to be starved out, as was poor Wheeler, or to let the horses suffer, either; so I will send the whole force out to the valley to cut grass with their sabres, so that the animals can at least have a little food each day."

Four score men were at once set to work cutting grass in the valley, and others in carrying it in blankets to the fort and putting it away.

Keeping up their work until after nightfall, they had the satisfaction of knowing that the horses could be kept from starving for days.

A hospital was established, the ammunition distributed, the horses all tied close together, and the canteens all filled at the spring, while the men were told that they must live on one-third rations.

Then one-fourth of the force were put on duty, the others turning in for sleep.

Thus the hours of the night passed away, but no alarm had been given.

Leaning back against the log cabin, half asleep, for he would not retire, Captain Ames was startled by a touch upon his arm. Was he asleep and dreaming, or was it the truth that the mysterious guide stood before him.

"The Indians are surrounding the fort, to attack just at dawn. Have all ready to fire just as soon as you see them advance, for they expect to surprise you.

"Lieutenant Danforth is out on the plain watching them, but he will come in when it is time."

Captain Ames rubbed his eyes to see if he was awake. When he looked again the guide was not there.

He had disappeared as mysteriously as he had come. Rising, the captain saw his men sleeping near by. Going to the stockade wall, he found the sentinels on the alert.

"Where is Lieutenant Danforth?" he asked.

No one knew.

Sent to look him up, the sergeant returned with the information that the lieutenant had passed out of the stockade gate at midnight, saying he would reconnoitre the surroundings of the fort, and returned to the plains.

Soon after the supposed scout had passed out again, and all that he had said was that he was from the force coming to the relief of Fort Dare.

Captain Ames was mystified. The one he had seen had not been an apparition. It was none other than the unknown guide—Buffalo Bill, or his double, as the sergeant had asserted.

Half an hour after Lieutenant Danforth was seen coming toward the gate.

Captain Ames met him there, and the lieutenant said, eagerly:

"You saw him?"

"The guide?"

"Yes. I went out to scout around, and met him. He reports Colonel Belden himself coming, with four-fifths of the men from Fort Way, and that they will arrive to-morrow night.

"I sent him in to see you, and he came back, and quickly hastened through the Indian lines before the fort was all surrounded."

"You saw the redskins?"

"Yes, and there are hundreds of them, at least, and by this time they have surrounded the entire fort in a circle, half a mile away. They expect to give us a complete surprise, and attack with a rush in the early dawn."

"Day will break within half an hour, so have all the men around and on duty. I will stand by the gun on the south end, you take your position, as next in command, by the gun on the north end, and the signal to open fire will be when the bugle sounds, and I will give the order when the Indians come in sight."

With these orders, the captain went to his post of duty, and in ten minutes the whole command of a hundred men were resting on their arms, awaiting the signal to begin the fight for life or death.

Ten minutes after the bugle sounded, and the fort seemed on fire with the flashing of the guns, while the air resounded with the wild war cries of a thousand savage redskins, as they had been surprised in their creeping upon a foe they had expected to surprise and overwhelm,

but under the avalanche of leaden and iron hail from muskets, carbines, revolvers, and the two pieces of artillery, they were hurled back, staggering, bleeding, and dropping dead under the fatal fire of the brave soldiers at bay in the Fort of Ill Omen.

CHAPTER VII.

THE UNKNOWN LEADS THE WAY.

"Ah, Guide, you are back again, and your horse shows that you have ridden hard," said the commandant at Fort Way.

"Yes, sir, it was a desperately hard ride, but I reached the fort."

"You saw Captain Ames?"

"Yes, sir; yet only for a moment, to give him warning that the Indians were surrounding his fort, to attack at dawn; but I met outside on the plains Lieutenant Danforth reconnoitering."

"Brave Danforth, it is just like him; but I am surprised that Ames allowed him to take such risks."

"He did not know it, sir. As the lieutenant stepped out, I saw him, and knowing that he was not an Indian, called him.

"He told me that he was watching for the Indians, as they had been warned by a horseman that they were to be attacked by an overwhelming force."

"Who could have warned them, Guide?"

"A comrade of mine, sir, whom I told to do so, and who also reported. I am sorry to say, sir, that a lieutenant and a small party sent out to go to Fort Way and ask you for reinforcements and supplies, had been ambushed, and either killed or captured by the redskins."

"This is sad news, indeed, but now to Captain Ames. You think he can hold out against the redskins until we arrive?"

"I do, sir, for he is a brave fighter, I judge, and not one to be caught napping."

"He is, indeed, a good soldier, and that is why I selected him for this work; but how did you get in and out of the fort with the Indians surrounding it?"

"I have a way, sir, that I mean no offense in saying I must keep to myself for the present," was the strange reply.

"When do you think it advisable to move?"

"At once, sir, so as not to push the horses too hard. I will guide you through the Death Valley, and so place your command, sir, that you can attack the Indians at dawn, and drive them into the pass beyond the fort, where you can crowd them upon the Grand Cañon and strike them a telling blow."

"I will do as you deem best, Guide."

The speakers were Colonel Arthur Belden, commandant of Fort Way, and the mysterious guide, the unknown rescuer of Captain Ames and his men from Death Valley, whom the sergeant had said was Buffalo Bill.

It was nearly noon of the day following the night visit of the strange guide to Fort Dare. He had ridden hard to get back to the command, which he had left, going into camp the night before.

The next morning Colonel Belden had been on the march before dawn, and had just gone into camp when the untiring guide had returned. Constantly day and night he had been in the saddle, for he had ridden to Fort Way to warn Colonel Belden of the danger of Captain Ames. Orders had just come from headquarters for Colonel Belden to leave a small force at Fort Way and go with all the rest of his command to establish a post in the midst of the Indian country.

This was what Captain Ames had been sent to do, but feeling that his small force was not sufficient, Colonel Belden had at once started to his rescue, with all his cavalry, six guns and half-a-dozen companies of infantry mounted, five hundred men all told, and leaving the supply train to follow as fast as they could.

The mysterious rescuer had been the guide, and the other scouts had to admit that he knew trails wholly unknown to them, and was cutting off many a mile upon the march. But who he was, or what he was, no one knew, for no one in that Arizona military post seemed to know Buffalo Bill by sight.

Again on the march, the untiring man, mounted upon a fresh horse, rode once more to the front and led the way to the Death Valley, which the Fort Way scouts said could not be crossed.

The Death Valley was entered at the same place where Arizona Al had led the Ames command, and guided out of it by the unknown rescuer of that party.

When Colonel Belden had his command in camp, beyond Death Valley, all were assured that the mysterious guide certainly knew his business well to lead them so unerringly through the lava valley, where no trail was visible.

"Now, sir, if you will advance in line, your cavalry on the flanks, and stretched out a mile in length, forming a crescent, you can hem the redskins in and drive them upon the Colorado Cañon as I stated. The position of the fort and its approaches are like this," and the guide drew by the firelight a well-executed map of the country about Fort Dare, and placed it before the colonel.

After a rest and a midnight supper, the command was moved forward, and the guide led the way until he said the fort was not a mile away, and they must be almost upon the Indians.

"The silence, sir, shows that they are preparing for another rush at dawn, for if the fort had been taken, we would find the Indian camp-fires blazing, and they would be wild with their triumph," said the Guide.

A short halt, and the command was once more moved forward in line; but hardly had they gone a quarter of a mile when loud war cries from hundreds of voices resounded ahead, and again Fort Dare was ablaze with fire, showing that the garrison was upon the alert, as before, and ready for a deadly battle.

"They pretended to leave the fort, sir, but came back at night, hoping to surprise them, you may be certain,

"The enemy is before you, sir, so my duty ends," said the Guide.

In ordering his soldiers to advance to combat, Colonel Belden did not think more then of the unknown guide; but when the surprised Indians, met by a terrific fire from

Fort Dare that staggered them, in spite of their overwhelming numbers, suddenly found a large force in their rear, and heard the firing of half-a-dozen twelve-pounders, and the bursting of the shells, they broke in wild disorder and fled in terror directly into the trap which the strange rescuer had told Colonel Belden they would. But the stranger could not be found when the fight was over.

Why had the strange rescuer disappeared so mysteriously after the good service he had rendered?

Had he been slain, and was he lying dead upon the field?

If not, why did he seek to conceal himself?

If he was really Buffalo Bill, why did he not make himself known?

CHAPTER VIII.

THE AMBUSH.

It was an overwhelming defeat for the Indians, for the guns of the relief party sent shells bursting into their midst, the two six-pounders of Fort Dare were turned upon them, the infantry poured a storm of lead upon them, and taking to flight on foot, for their ponies had been cut off in a valley and were captured, the cavalry had fought with carbine, revolver, and sabre, and the flying redskins had been most terribly punished.

Scattered through hills and valleys, hiding in the timber and among rocky cañons, the Navahoes only sought to escape with their lives, and make their way back to their villages as best they could.

United, the two commands felt that they were more than a match for all the braves that could be brought against them, and the soldiers went into camp. Colonel Belden felt assured that Fort Dare was the very place for the advance post he had orders to establish, and Major Wheeler and his men, whose bones lay scattered about, had been avenged.

As Captain Ames' party had lost heavily in their gallant fight, and his own men had suffered in killed and wounded, Colonel Belden gave orders for the care of the sufferers and the burial of the dead to be the first

duty, while he decided to send an officer and escort at once to Fort Way with the news of the victory, and orders to hasten on the supply train.

The officer selected for this duty was Lieutenant Frank Danforth, not only because Captain Ames recommended him for the service, but also as there was expected to arrive at Fort Way Miss Grace Soulsby, the young lady to whom he was engaged.

"Tell Grace, Danforth, how it was that I could not await her coming, and that I send you as her escort to this point, which is to be my headquarters now, so here she will have to come."

With a scout, sergeant and eight cavalymen as an escort, Lieutenant Danforth left Fort Dare late in the afternoon upon his mission, flanked Death Valley, found the trail of the colonel's expedition, and in a couple of days reached Fort Way, starting the supply train at once on its way to the new fort, as ordered.

At Fort Way only one company of infantry, a section of artillery, and a troop of cavalry were to remain, and as Lieutenant Danforth wished to send every soldier to the front again, he ordered the sergeant and four of his men to return with the supply train, keeping the scout and other four men to remain as his escort, for Grace Soulsby had not yet arrived.

After a wait of several days the colonel's ward, who was also his niece, arrived, accompanying a supply train bringing stores for Fort Way and other posts.

A more beautiful girl than Grace Soulsby one would not care to see, and her nature was as lovely as was her face and form.

But there lingered in her dark eyes when in repose a look of sadness almost intense, and those who knew her best said she carried a sorrow of some kind in her heart, one which even her approaching marriage to the handsomest and richest officer in the army would not dispel.

Dressed in a blue riding habit, ornamented with braid and army buttons, and with a black slouch hat encircled by a gold cord and shaded with a dark plume, she looked

her best when mounted upon her fine bay horse, for she was a superb rider.

At her saddle horn hung a small rifle, which she could fire with deadly aim, for she had killed big and small game along the trail to Fort Way, and with the wives of several soldiers to keep her company, she said that she had greatly enjoyed the long ride and its dangers.

Finding that Lieutenant Danforth was there to escort her on to Fort Dare, where her uncle's headquarters had been transferred, and that the officers' families had gone on with the supply train, she had made no comment, but expressed a wish to go on alone, rather than wait for the departure of another train.

"I have but a scout and four men with me as an escort, Grace, but I think you will hardly need more, as there will be little fear of Indians, after their terrible defeat.

"We can make you quite comfortable the two nights we will be on the trail, for I shall carry an ambulance along," said Lieutenant Danforth.

"Do not take any trouble on my account, please, Lieutenant Danforth, for I am used to roughing it," was the reply.

But the gallant young officer did do all he could for the comfort of the beautiful girl, and her ambulance was fitted out with the best the fort could furnish, while his colored body servant, answering to the odd name of White Black had been detained at the fort to go with the escort, for the negro was famous as a camp cook.

So it was that after a rest of several days at the fort, Lieutenant Danforth and Grace Soulsby started on the long trail to Fort Dare, accompanied by the scout, four troopers, and White Black, the latter driving the large ambulance devoted to the young lady's use and her baggage.

But Grace Soulsby insisted that she would ride all the way in the saddle.

As they were drawing near camp, near noon of the second day of their journey, Grace Soulsby and Lieutenant Danforth were well ahead, when suddenly from an ambush, came several rifle shots, and down in his tracks

sank the horse ridden by the young officer. Before he could extricate himself from beneath his fallen horse, Lieutenant Danforth was set upon by three rough men, one of whom dealt him a stunning blow with a revolver, while a fourth man, wearing a mask, seized the reins of the animal ridden by Grace Soulsby, and called out:

"You are my game, young lady, and it will cost a fortune to set you free, while as for Frank Danforth, I shall hang him for the grudge I owe him.

"Up with him, men, to yonder tree, if you have not already killed him!"

"I know that voice—you are Dean Vernon," cried Grace, retaining her presence of mind in spite of the attack upon them and the words of the masked leader of the desperadoes.

"Yes, I am Dean Vernon, Grace Soulsby, the man whom you refused to marry, the man whose heart you made callous, and whom you drove West to become an outlaw, casting me aside as you did Cecil Kennon, another man whom love for you drove to the bad! All because you loved gold, and wanted to marry one who had a fortune, that man there, Frank Danforth, my hated rival, and whom you shall now see me swing up to yonder tree."

"Oh! have mercy upon him, for he has done you no wrong!

"It was I who refused your love, Dean Vernon, I who consented to marry him.

"I am not rich, but take what I have and spare his life, and let me go free—see, your men are hanging a man who is half dazed by the blow he received—they are swinging him into the air—oh, God! can this crime be, and——"

The sharp crack of a revolver broke in upon her words, the rope that had dragged Lieutenant Danforth up into the air was cut in twain, and out of a thicket dashed a horseman, a revolver in each hand, coming alone to the rescue of the officer and the young girl. It was the mysterious rescuer, and he called out, sternly:

"Hands up, or die!"

CHAPTER IX.

THE MYSTERIOUS RESCUER AGAIN.

At the crack of the revolver which had sent a bullet unerringly that it cut the rope suspending Lieutenant Danforth in midair, letting him fall heavily to the ground. Grace Soulsby shrank backward with a startled cry, while the dashing of the horseman upon the scene suddenly gave her hope.

For a moment she reeled with the weakness which nearly overwhelmed her, and, staggering backward, leaned against a tree for support, for she saw that the horseman was alone, and four desperate men faced him.

But his horse came on like the wind, straight for the group, the rider upright in his saddle, his hands extended, and each one grasping a revolver.

There was surely no backdown in the daring rider on his horse. It was no game of bluff, but one of do or die.

The desperadoes seemed at first dumfounded by the bold attack. They saw the victim they were hanging cut down by an unerring shot, they beheld a horseman coming to the rescue, and they were sure others must be following, and momentarily were so paralyzed with fear that they stood wholly undecided what to do.

The delay was fatal to them, for the same unerring hand that had sent a bullet to cut the rope now sent a shot from a revolver to find a target in a human form.

It was the masked leader of the outlaws who had been singled out, and he fell with a wild cry of despair upon his lips, a name he twice uttered, an oath, and a prayer, which death brought to a quick ending.

At the sight of their leader's fall the men gave a yell, fired a volley from their revolvers at the coming horseman, and sprang away like deer, to reach their horses.

But another of their number fell ere they had gone ten feet, though the left arm of the rider had dropped to his side at their fire upon him, and his horse had staggered as though hard hit.

But still the horse dashed on, and a moment more pursuer and pursued had disappeared in the near timber, the

After having reached their horses, mounted in wild haste, and dashed away.

All this Grace Soulsby saw, and as she stood leaning against the tree she heard the receding fire of the outlaws during their flight.

But there before her lay Lieutenant Danforth, now resting upon his elbow and trying to understand the situation.

At once she sprang to his side and cried:

"Thank God, they have not killed you!"

"Did you see that man?" he asked, in low, hoarse tones, pressing his fingers upon his throat, for the rope was still about his neck.

"The outlaw leader? Yes; he is dead."

"No, no; the rescuer!"

"Yes, he has saved us, and has gone in pursuit of the outlaws, two of whom he killed."

"It is the mysterious guide of Death Valley. I saw him, though I could not speak then— Ah! here comes the scout and his men."

Grace Soulsby had taken the rope from about his neck, and with an effort the lieutenant rose to his feet, bleeding from a gash over his temple, where the outlaw had struck him the stunning blow, and with a deep, red mark about his throat, where the rope had cut into the skin.

The scout had heard the firing and dashed on, the soldiers close behind him, and the ambulance following.

In a few words Grace Soulsby explained the attack from an ambush upon them, that the lieutenant's horse had been killed, and what had followed, adding:

"A moment more and Lieutenant Danforth would have been dead; but, thank Heaven! that brave man was in time to rescue him, and I never saw a braver deed than his."

"No; I owe my life to him, whoever he is, and it was a daring, yes, desperate deed of his to take the chances he did. Scout, suppose you go with a couple of the men to see if he needs aid, while we camp here."

The scout and two of the soldiers dashed away, while

the other two men and the negro prepared to camp while they had dinner.

Lieutenant Danforth, after a drink of water and a swallow of brandy from his flask, felt relieved, and Grace most skillfully dressed the wound in his head, drawing it together with adhesive plaster which she had with her.

The officer rolled up the severed rope to keep as a souvenir, and the soldiers took his saddle and bridle from the dead horse and put it on the splendid animal which had belonged to the masked leader of the outlaws, while they also took possession of the animal of the other man slain.

"You must carry the leader's body in the ambulance to the fort. I have a special reason for asking it," Grace Soulsby said.

Wrapped in a blanket, the dead leader was placed in the vehicle, while the other body was to be buried where it lay.

Just as dinner was ready the scout and the soldiers came back, bringing a third outlaw, and he was wounded in the leg.

"We found him trying to get away, sir, but overhauled him, as he was on foot and wounded. He says the rescuer's horse fell dead as he came up with him, and we saw the animal lying there; but his rider threw his bridle and saddle on this man's horse, sir, and went on in pursuit of the other outlaw, this one playing possum to escape, for he pretended to be dead. When he saw us coming he lighted out. We thought it no use to go further, sir."

"No, scout, for that brave unknown can take care of himself. Dress that fellow's wound there as well as you can, bury the dead body, and get your dinner, and we will push on rapidly to Fort Dare to-night," said Lieutenant Danforth.

His orders were obeyed, and within an hour they were again in the saddle. With the prisoner mounted upon one of the captured horses, and the body of the outlaws' leader in the ambulance, they started again on the trail for Fort Dare.

Lieutenant Danforth had suggested camping longer, expecting the rescuer to return, but Grace Soulsby had urged against this, saying earnestly:

"No, he will not return here; I am sure he will not. He spoke no word to me, but went on in a way that showed how determined he was to run down the last of those outlaws."

"Yes, and he doubtless knows that we have help near," said the lieutenant.

"But who was he?" asked Grace, earnestly.

"It is the man whom Sergeant Dale says is the great scout of the Northwest, Buffalo Bill," announced Lieutenant Danforth.

CHAPTER X.

STARTLING INFORMATION.

It was just sunset when Lieutenant Danforth rode into Fort Dare with Grace Soulsby by his side, the escort and ambulance following.

Colonel Belden was already established in pleasant quarters, which his wife had begun to make look most homelike, and the married officers had prepared for the arrival of their families before the supply train arrived bringing them along.

Fort Dare was being enlarged and strengthened, cabins and corrals were being built, and there was quite a village of white tents in the timber on a hill near by, where the soldiers were encamped.

"Another month and Fort Dare will be one of the strongest forts and the most comfortable one on the frontier," Colonel Belden had said on the morning of the day of his ward's arrival.

In spite of its cruel and weird memories the fort was a delightful one.

The bleached bones of the soldiers who had fallen with Major Wheeler had been gathered up and buried in a pretty grove on the creek bank, and everything had been done to efface the memory of that sad event.

When it was reported that Lieutenant Danforth was

returning and Grace was recognized with him, the garrison turned out and gave them a most joyous welcome.

Then they saw that the lieutenant's head was bound up, that he wore his short collar open, and appeared to have been in serious trouble, while the first thing taken from the ambulance was a dead body.

Riding between the soldier escort was a most villainous-looking individual, his hands tied behind him.

All this showed that there had been trouble on the way, and of a most serious kind.

Welcomed by her uncle and aunt, Grace quickly told the story of the attack upon them, and the rescue by one whom Lieutenant Danforth had recognized as the mysterious guide of Death Valley, and believed to be Buffalo Bill.

"I was dazed by the blow I had received, Colonel Belden, and half choked to death by the hanging; but I fell heavily as the rope was cut, and it helped me, I think, for I heard the shots, and, raising myself on my arm, saw who it was that had come to our rescue.

"Never did I see a more daring act than that brave fellow coming single-handed to face those men," said Lieutenant Danforth.

Then he added:

"He saved my life, and I intend to hunt him up and show my appreciation of it."

That night as Grace sat with her uncle and aunt in their quarters, Colonel Belden asked:

"Why did you wish the body of the outlaw leader brought to the fort, Grace, while his companion was buried at your noon camp?"

"Have you seen the body, sir?"

"I have not."

"When you do, uncle, you will recognize an old suitor of mine."

"Why, Grace!"

"Aunt Ellen, you remember Dean Vernon, do you not?"

"Yes, he was a handsome fellow; but the most dissipated man in the town.

"He committed a burglary, I believe, killing an officer of the law who attempted to capture him, and went wholly to the bad, I have heard."

"It is Dean Vernon's body that I asked Lieutenant Danforth to bring to the fort, for I knew you would recognize him, though uncle did not."

"While Lieutenant Danforth lay insensible, the outlaw told me who he was and raised his mask. He said that I had, for love of gold, sent Cecil Kennon away, and he had gone to the bad."

"But Kennon was killed, massacred by Indians, I heard."

"That was a mistake, aunt, but I did not send him away willingly, as you know. Both you and uncle are aware that the fortune left to me was on certain conditions."

"To get my legacy it was willed that I was to marry the one to whom the other half of the fortune was to go."

"I loved another, but as my father was desperately involved financially, and needed my fortune to help him, to save him from ruin, yes, from death, for he threatened to take his own life, I consented to marry my co-heir in the Trenholm inheritance."

"I could not but admire him, for he is a noble-hearted man, brave, and a true soldier; but my heart was another's."

"I told Cecil Kennon just what I intended to do, and he at once left home, and a year after we heard that he was massacred by the Indians; and do you know that it was at this very fort, for he was, at the time, a guest of Major Wheeler upon that ill-fated expedition?"

"Grace, you are right, for I recall now that he was with Wheeler, though I never met Kennon, you remember. Your aunt knew him, however, and greatly admired him, and we deeply grieved over his sad fate, for we knew his love for you, and that he was the one love of your life."

"But your father urged your engagement to Danforth, and you yielded, and knowing what a splendid fellow he was, I hoped you would be happy with him."

"Yes, uncle, I feel that I could have been contented, if not happy; but you do not know that when father died two years ago he had so mismanaged the estate Lieutenant Danforth and I had been left together, that nearly half of it had been covered with mortgages."

"You, as my guardian, did not know the exact situation, but the two executors have kept the facts hidden, and by wise investments have done much to pay off the debts, and with my consent, Lieutenant Danforth has drawn his full income right along, mine being cut down to one-fifth. Thus matters stand now, and when I become Mrs. Danforth, the estate will have nearly regained its former value."

"I am indeed glad to hear this, Grace, for your own sake and for Danforth's."

"Yes, uncle, I know how you feel; but let me tell you a great secret, and I desire to seek your advice and Aunt Ellen's."

"Yes, Grace."

"Cecil Kennon is not dead!"

Both the colonel and his wife started at this piece of intelligence, and the former asked:

"Have you proof of this, Grace?"

"I have."

"You remember, he came out West and became a scout, then went to prospecting, made some money, and the last we heard from him was that he went with Major Wheeler, not one of whose party escaped massacre."

"So it was reported, uncle, but the man you know as the mysterious guide, and the unknown rescuer, is none other than Cecil Kennon. I saw him to-day distinctly, for he it was who saved Danforth's life and rescued me."

The colonel was silent for a moment, and then said:

"This deepens the mystery!"

"How so?"

"I have begun to believe fully that our mysterious rescuer, and the man who has just saved you and Danforth, is really Buffalo Bill."

"Can Kennon have taken that name?" asked the colonel's wife.

"Oh, no, for it belongs to Scout William F. Cody; but others than Sergeant Dale now say that our strange and most remarkable rescuer is Buffalo Bill, and I believed it; but now comes this story told by Grace, that it is her old lover, Kennon."

The colonel was evidently deeply mystified.

CHAPTER XI.

THE LIEUTENANT'S SACRIFICE.

"Colonel Belden, I wish to ask a favor of you, sir," said Lieutenant Danforth, several days after his arrival at Fort Dare.

"Granted at once, Danforth."

"Thank you, sir."

"I brought you a prisoner when I came in with Miss Soulsby, and I wish to ask you to grant his freedom, for I believe the favor to him will more than repay for not hanging him, as he richly deserves."

"I also wish to take that man with me, sir, along with Burgess, the scout, and have a few days' leave. This is what I ask, sir."

"All right, Danforth, it is granted, as I said, but do not go off and get your head into another noose."

"I'll try not to, sir," was the answer.

That night the lieutenant, Scout Burgess, and the outlaw prisoner rode away from the fort, the latter bound, and the scout leading a pack animal.

They directed their way toward Death Valley, and when they had reached the cliffs the prisoner took the lead. He led them into the valley by the secret pass, and crossed it, halted at a mountain of piled up rocks.

"Here is whar he goes into his retreat, though how to git thar I don't know; but ef yer wait right here he'll be sartain to come out or go in before a day or two," said the prisoner.

"All right, here I remain, and Burgess, you go back with the prisoner to the place I told you I would join you, and I'll come there when I see the man I wish to find."

"Yes, sir; I'll be there and take good care of the pris-

oner, too, for if harm befalls you he has got to die, and then he has also got to betray his companions before his contract for freedom is finished," said the scout.

Leaving several canteens of water, a blanket, and some provisions for the officer, Burgess rode away with the outlaw, taking the lieutenant's horse with him.

Finding a place to hide in among the rocks, Lieutenant Frank Danforth spread his blanket and went to sleep. It was just dawn when he was awakened by the sound of hoof falls.

Looking across the valley, he saw a horseman coming at a canter. It was clear light when he drew near, and, stepping out of his hiding-place, the officer confronted him.

Quick as lightning the horseman had him covered, but, seeing who he was, he said :

"That was a dangerous move, Lieutenant Danforth, to take with a man who is constantly hunted."

"You appear to know me?"

"Yes; we have met before, you recall?"

"Yes; the other day; but before then I knew you, though but slightly; but now I know you well, and I owe my life to you, Cecil Kennon."

"Ah! do you know me as Cecil Kennon?"

"I do."

"Why, he was supposed to have been killed several years ago, and is content to have it so."

"But I am not content, for I know your sacrifice and your noble nature. I am aware that because you were poor you gave up the love of Grace Soulsby to save her father, and that she pledged herself to marry me for the same reason. I have loved her most dearly—who could help it?—but all along I felt that I had not won her love and only two nights ago I learned the truth. It was from her aunt that I heard the story, who knew nothing about it, nor did her uncle. I heard of her sacrifice and yours, for her father's sake, but he is dead, and, as she is of age now, she gets the property anyhow, while, as you were supposed to have been killed with Major Wheeler at Fort Dare, she was willing to keep her pledge and be

come my wife. But I am not willing, knowing all, that she should, for her aunt told me that she recognized you the day you so daringly came to our rescue and saved me.

"Now, Kennon, return with me to the fort, and renew your old friendship with Grace Soulsby, who still loves you as dearly as you do her, while I will be happy in one way that I did not marry one whose heart could never be mine.

"I do not know why you lead this wild life, but I am sure you have not been driven to it, so I say again, return to the fort with me and be my friend."

The strange horseman had regarded Lieutenant Danforth as he spoke, with a surprised and puzzled expression upon his handsome and determined face.

Once or twice he seemed about to break in upon the rapidly spoken and earnest words of the officer, but checked himself and listened until the last words were uttered.

Then, as Danforth held forth his hand, he said:

"I am more than willing to be your friend, Lieutenant Danforth, for you have proven yourself to be a brave man, and by your words, just now, a most noble one. But I am not the one you believe me to be."

"What! Can——"

"I heard all that you said just now, though intended for another. I listened for reasons of my own, and which I cannot now explain. But I am not the man you named, not Lieutenant Kennon."

"You cannot deceive me, for you are playing a part."

"Yes, I admit it, and I cannot just now explain why I am doing so, but I must at least let you know enough of my secret to say again that I am not Lieutenant Kennon, but an army scout, just now playing a part."

"Kennon, I believe the same motives that prompted you to give up the woman you loved and exile yourself here in this wilderness—yes, and to let it be supposed that you were dead—prompts you now to deny your identity and say that you are not Lieutenant Kennon."

"Lieutenant Danforth, you are mistaken, for I assure you that I am not Lieutenant Kennon."

"In Heaven's name, who are you, then, for you are his double, his very counterpart? No, no, in looks, size, age, in everything you are Lieutenant Kennon, for, though I knew him but slightly, as I said, he is not the man to forget."

"Lieutenant Danforth, as an officer and as man to man, I shall tell you a secret."

"You may depend on me, sir."

"I am the army scout of the Northwest, William F. Cody, better known, perhaps, as Buffalo Bill," was the startling response.

CHAPTER XII.

STILL IN DOUBT.

The incredulous look that rested upon the face of Lieutenant Frank Danforth, at the assertion of the strange man that he was not the man he believed him to be, but in reality Buffalo Bill, could not but be observed by the latter, for he said:

"Do you doubt me?"

"Pardon me, if I say that I know when Cecil Kennon came to the frontier, and enough of the great army scout, William Cody, to know that they cannot be one and the same man."

"Nor do I claim it, sir."

"Then, as an army scout and Buffalo Bill, why did you not make yourself known to Captain Ames?"

"That is my secret, sir."

"This is very mysterious, indeed; but do you know Cecil Kennon?"

"I am not here to answer questions, nor am I hiding here because I am a fugitive for some crime. I am in this Death Valley for a purpose I cannot now explain; but will say this much, that if you will meet me here in a couple of days, at noon, I will be on hand to say what I can, or cannot, under the circumstances."

"I will be here. But what about Cecil Kennon?"

"I shall say nothing."

"Then it is not to Kennon that I owe my life?"

"Your rescue with your troop the other day, your escape from being hanged by outlaws, you owe to me, sir, for I was so fortunate as to be on hand to serve you."

"And you are Buffalo Bill?"

"I am, sir, but remember, this is to be for the present a secret, save perhaps to Colonel Belden, whom you doubtless desire to make a report to."

"I will, and am glad to be allowed to do so."

"But who guided you here, may I ask, sir?" asked the scout.

"The outlaw whom we captured through your daring aid; but were you not wounded, for Miss Soulsby, the lady who also owes her rescue to you, be you who you may, told me that she thought you had been?"

"Slightly, in the arm, benumbing it for an instant only; it was nothing."

"But about the outlaw?" he asked, inquiringly.

"Well, I made terms with him to lead me here, believing that I sought Cecil Kennon, though I would have done so to have found you, after all your services."

The scout smiled, but said:

"The man's pardon was a part of your terms with him, I suppose, sir?"

"Yes."

"I have no desire to break in upon your agreement, lieutenant, but all I ask is that you bring him with you when you come to meet me two days hence, and now, of course, let him know that you have him in your charge when you come to this spot."

"But I have promised him his pardon, and——"

"I will not interfere with that, sir, nor in any way compromise you."

"Then I will do as you request, and bring the man; in fact, I intended to allow him to go upon returning to the fort, as in finding you for me, he had kept his part of the bargain."

"Then, sir, I shall be here to meet you," and the strange rescuer spoke as though there was no more to be said.

"I will leave you, then. Only answer me if you know anything about Lieutenant Kennon, as to whether he is living or dead."

"I know only that that man became a scout for the army, and was said to be at Fort Ill Omen when Major Wheeler and his command were killed there. In the list of slain his name was given, and more I cannot say."

"Well, again I say that I owe you my life, whoever you are, and never will I forget it," and Lieutenant Danforth again held forth his hand, which was warmly grasped in return.

"I have a scout waiting for me in camp with my horse, and will have to go there on foot," said the lieutenant.

"You can take the trail of the horses, for I see their tracks, sir."

"Oh, yes, I can find him."

"And it will be best not to say that you saw me—until your next visit."

"I will be guided by you, scout," and the officer moved away.

When he had gone a few hundred yards he looked back, but the horseman had gone.

He had hardly gone fifty yards further before the nature of the ground caused him to lose the trail of the horses, and he at once began a close search to find the tracks.

It was some little time before he could find them, but at last they showed again when the soil became less flinty, and he was moving at once more briskly on his way, when a shot rang out ahead, followed by a stern command of "hands up." Then immediately came another shot, and a third one.

The lieutenant halted quickly, and, a good plainsman, he sprung to the shelter of a group of rocks, and was ready to meet a foe.

But, to his surprise, out of a clump of bushes ahead there appeared, a moment after, the tall form of the mysterious rescuer.

"Buffalo Bill—or Cecil Kennon!" cried the officer.

But, clearly uttered, came the words:

"Come on, Lieutenant Danforth, for he is dead."

"Dead? Who is dead? For I supposed I was fired upon," and the officer moved on, but in a wary way, as he uttered the words.

He was certainly very much mystified, and regarded the rescuer in a strange way as he walked up to him.

"I do not wonder at your mistake, sir; but I saw a man dodge out of sight on your trail as you left me, and I felt that he intended to run on and ambush you.

"I left my horse and ran across the ridge to that spur there, and was in time to see him take position, rifle in hand, to fire upon you.

"I dislike to kill a man without warning, so fired to warn him, at the same time calling out to him to hold up his hands.

"He instantly fired at me, and I then shot to kill, while you mistook the shots and my order to him as intended to you."

"And again you place a life debt upon me."

"Such debts are common among men of the plains, sir, and we regard them but lightly."

"I do not; but you killed the man?"

"He lies yonder, sir."

They walked to where the man, a rough-looking character, lay dead, a bullet in his forehead.

"Do you know him?"

"As one of a band of outlaws known as the White Savahoes, and one of the same band that attacked you yesterday."

"Ah! the fourth man, and who escaped you?"

"No, sir; he did not escape me, for I killed the fourth man and buried him that day, but this is one of the band which the others belonged."

"Ah! I see; but are there many of them?"

"Not now, sir," was the very significant response, with words quickly added:

"Once the band numbered a couple of dozen."

Lieutenant Danforth said no more, just then, other than to remark:

"We must bury him."

"I will see to that, sir, so you need not be detained. I will meet you as we have arranged," and with an ease that showed his great strength, he threw the body of the outlaw he had killed across his broad shoulders, and walked back on the trail, leaving the lieutenant to continue his way, wondering still more at this last meeting with the strange man.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE LIEUTENANT'S STORY.

Lieutenant Frank Danforth reached camp without further adventure, and found Scout Burgess closely guarding the outlaw prisoner.

The officer made no explanation to the scout other than to say:

"I shall return again, for I desire to talk with Colonel Belden before I make a certain move I have in mind."

The scout saw that the officer did not care to say more about the affair, so wisely asked no questions, but saddled the horses and led the way to the trail back to the fort.

The outlaw prisoner seemed disappointed at having to return to the fort, but the lieutenant silenced him with the remark:

"I shall keep my terms with you, my man, when the proper time comes, never fear; but you must return now with me to the fort, and again to this camp, before I set you free."

"If you let him free, sir, it's like turnin' a snake loose," returned Burgess.

But Frank Danforth made no reply, and they moved on toward the fort.

Leaving Scout Burgess upon their arrival at the fort to take the prisoner to the guardhouse, Frank Danforth at once sought headquarters for an interview with Colonel Belden.

"Well, what luck, Danforth?" asked the colonel.

"Rather different from what I expected, sir, as you shall hear."

"Did the prisoner fail you?"

"Oh, no, sir, for he led me to where he said I would meet the rescuer if I waited, and I was left there while Burgess returned with the outlaw to camp."

"And you met Kennon?"

"I saw the rescuer, sir, but he is not the man we supposed."

"Grace could not have been mistaken, surely."

"She was, Colonel Belden, or the man has deceived me."

"How do you mean?"

"I will tell you the story, sir, but first say that Sergeant Dale is right, for the rescuer is the great scout, Buffalo Bill."

"Ah! but have you proof of this?"

"His word, sir."

"That should certainly be proof enough."

"It should be, sir, but I confess I am still mystified. He says his name must be kept secret, for I am allowed to make the fact known only to you."

"Strange! It is beyond my comprehension."

"He says he has a motive for his secrecy, sir, and will meet me two days hence, at noon, at the same place, and so I returned to have a talk with you, sir."

"Did he know Kennon?"

"I think that he did not say, sir; in fact, I could get nothing out of him about Kennon, only that he had his own reasons for not making himself known; but I hope to know his secret when I meet him again."

"I hope so. In the meantime I shall tell Grace that her rescuer was not Cecil Kennon, though I suppose we must not yet tell her who he says he is."

As soon as Lieutenant Danforth left the colonel's quarters Colonel Belden sent for his niece.

Of course, she was deeply surprised on hearing the story of Lieutenant Danforth's trip, and when, two days later, the lieutenant departed to keep his engagement, accompanied by the prisoner and Scout Burgess, she waited anxiously to learn the result of his venture.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE MEETING.

Leaving Scout Burgess and the outlaw prisoner in camp, to await his return, Lieutenant Danforth went alone to the scene of his meeting two days before.

The young officer went on foot, for he had not forgotten his strange escape of the day before, and had an idea that he might again be ambushed by some one of the "White Navahoes."

Making his way to the same rocky retreat where he had been the day before in hiding, he was greeted with:

"You are on time, Lieutenant Danforth."

The speaker stepped out before him and was Buffalo Bill.

The officer extended his hand, and Buffalo Bill said:

"I can relieve you now of your promise of secrecy, for I believe there will no longer be cause for my remaining unknown. But did you bring your prisoner with you?"

"Yes, he is in camp with Scout Burgess."

"Then come with me, sir, for I desire to have a talk with you, and we will go to my retreat."

Without a word, the officer followed his guide, who led the way through a narrow and winding cañon into the mountains.

It was not over a dozen feet wide, and on each side wall-like cliffs towered to a height of several hundred feet.

At each turn in the cañon had been built a breastwork of rocks, making it possible for one man to hold it against a score.

After a walk of half a mile the cañon led into a small but fertile and beautiful valley, in which was a lake fed by springs.

The entrance to this valley was strongly fortified, where upon the sides of the cliffs were little rocky retreats which a man could retire and yet command the whole basin.

Timber in plenty, pure water, grass in abundance, a garden patch and a comfortable cabin with two rooms made the spot an ideal retreat.

Three huge and savage-looking dogs met the two

the entrance to the valley, but showed no desire to ask the officer.

"You have, indeed, a delightful retreat here, Scout," said Danforth.

"It is, sir, and the tops of the surrounding cliffs can be reached by birds, while, through a cavern, near, could make a retreat if driven to do so."

"The spot was well chosen, and you deserve credit for

"The credit is not mine, sir, but here we are, and please seated."

"The officer saw that the cabin was comfortable, and furnished with home-made and rustic furniture, while there were three cot beds and as many chairs.

"You are not alone here, I see."

"No, there are three of us, one of the other two being a half-breed boy you know of, and the third you shall know of now.

"I am an army scout of the Northwest, and only occasionally have I ever been in this part of the country, of which I knew very little until lately.

"I will first state that I have a scout friend out here, to whom I owe my life, and whom I induced to become a scout.

"We became devoted friends, and it was with the best regret that I heard that he had been in the massacre of Fort Ill Omen, and among the slain with Major Peeler and his men.

"By a strange coincidence, the commanding officer of the Platte Military District had been asked to allow me to come down into this Grand Cañon country to ferret out the retreat of the band of outlaws known as the White Navahoes, at the same time that a personal messenger came to me also asking me to come.

"I was, therefore, glad to obey the orders of my commander, but I asked that the fact of my going should remain a secret.

"This request I made because the messenger urged it in the wish of the one who sent him to me.

"With that messenger I came and prepared for work, to play a part in fact.

"To this spot I was brought, and the messenger, my guide, was the half-breed youth we call Pinto, whose mother was a white captive of the Navahoes, and who is more paleface than redskin, though with all the pluck and cunning of an Indian, true as steel to a friend and cruel as death to a foe.

"I found out all that from the boy while on our long trail here, for we were ten days on the way.

"The one who sent for me was the man I had believed slain at Fort Ill Omen.

"He had been captured at the fort, his life spared by this half-breed youth, and, badly wounded, he had been nursed back to life by this boy and his mother.

"But soon after the woman died, and then the boy was glad to escape from the Indians, for his mother had taught him much of her own people, and he aided the captive, my friend, to escape, and they got away in safety.

"My friend, for reasons of his own, preferred to be thought dead, and having accidentally found this retreat he came here to live.

"He had discovered some gold, here in the stream beds, and with this he sent the boy to Fort Wingate to purchase horses and supplies, and he returned with all that was needed.

"They built their cabin, and, by degrees, fitted themselves up, as now you see. Those dogs the boy also got at the fort when little puppies.

"But the man who was exiling himself had a duty to perform.

"It was no more than secretly notifying the forts of the movements of the Indians, and also to drive from the trails the outlaw band of White Navahoes.

"He set for himself the task, and was slowly carrying it out, when, in a fight with the band of outlaws, he was twice wounded and left for dead.

"A bullet had glanced upon his head, dazing him, and another had broken his leg.

"He had recognized the leader of the outlaw band, and

been recognized by him, as a one-time friend in the past; but the outlaw, believing him dead, was content to feel that he had wiped out a foe upon his path and left him to become food for the coyotes.

"But Pinto was upon his trail, and soon came along with his horse, aided him to mount, and brought him to his retreat.

"Taught by the medicine men of the Navahoes, and by his mother, Pinto had become a fairly good surgeon, while my friend had also studied surgery, so that the wounded leg was skillfully set, the cut in the head dressed, and all left to time and good care to heal.

"But my friend had a desire to complete his work of wiping out the band of White Navahoes.

"It is two months since I came, and I have been continuing the good work, and learning the country.

"Thus, was I able to rescue you from starvation, and lead your command to Fort Ill Omen, and also to go to Fort Way for aid to save you and your men from the fate that overtook Major Wheeler."

"And your friend who exiled himself here in this beautiful resort?" asked Lieutenant Danforth, interrupting the story for the first time.

"Now, I have more to tell about that exile," answered Buffalo Bill, for the mask of mystery is now removed, said the noted scout.

CHAPTER XV.

THE SECRET REVEALED.

Frank Danforth had listened with the deepest attention to the strange story of the scout, and now felt that the climax was to come.

He waited patiently for the scout to speak again, and the latter now did so:

"It is a somewhat remarkable thing, that two men, not related, can be so much alike as is my friend and myself.

"In height, weight, color of hair, and style of mustache and beard, we are, I may say, counterparts——"

"Ah, your double?"

"Yes, for we are doubles, as it were, and that is why my friend sent for me, as he was unable to do anything with a broken leg and wished the outlaws to be impressed with the belief that he was still upon their track.

"He and Pinto had cut down the band by a dozen, and I subtracted a few more—four in a couple of days, as

you remember—and one you have as a prisoner, while there are several left, and to be accounted for.

"Now, Miss Soulsby, you tell me, recognized a leader as Dean Vernon, and she was right.

"But she was mistaken in my case, as were you also.

"But learning the full situation of affairs from you when believing me Cecil Kennon, I decided to act, and therefore, asked for this second meeting with you.

"I had long known that my friend suffered from some secret sorrow; but he never spoke of it, and your words told me what it was.

"I told him what I had heard, of your story, your noble action in relinquishing your claim upon Miss Soulsby, and urged him to come out of his shell and accept the situation as it is, no longer remaining in exile.

"He has picked up much gold in these mountains, to make him comfortable; he idolizes Miss Soulsby, and has said she loves him and that you care for no woman without her love, so he has consented at last to take his chances with you."

"He is right, for his chances are assured, and I will relinquish all claims, since it was but a barter, and not a love affair. I shall be the first to congratulate him, tell him," was Frank Danforth's prompt response.

"Pard Kennon," called out Buffalo Bill.

"Ay, ay," answered a deep voice from within the cabin.

"Come here, please, and meet Lieutenant Danforth." Leaning on a cane, Cecil Kennon, came out of the cabin, and Frank Danforth strode forward and grasped his hand.

"My God, what a striking resemblance!" cried Danforth, looking first at one, then at the other of the two men.

Though wan and pale from suffering, the striking resemblance of Cecil Kennon to Buffalo Bill was startling.

"Now, Lieutenant Danforth, you will have dinner with us, and then please return to your camp, and let your prisoner go, for he has kept his word to you, I believe, though it is to Mr. Kennon, not myself, that he owes his life."

"I do not wonder that he is mixed," said Danforth, and he added:

"Yes, I will let him go, upon condition that he leave this part of the country."

"As you deem best, sir; and then you and scout will guess return here, please, in the night."

"You are willing, then, to have your retreat known now?"

"Yes, for Burgess is a scout at the fort, and it matters of service to him," and with the skill of a finished

Buffalo Bill soon had a good dinner ready, after which the lieutenant took his departure for his camp.

Within a few hours he returned, accompanied by scout Burgess, and reported that he had given the outlaw his pardon, a horse and outfit, and some money, and he was on his way to make all haste to get out of that part of the country. Scout Burgess was surprised at the snug retreat, and looked upon Buffalo Bill with admiring eyes, and wondered that the two splendid-looking men he found there could be so much alike.

"Now, lieutenant, there are five of us, or will be soon, and we can readily take in the remainder of the band of White Navahoes."

"Though still a little lame, Pard Kennon can use a gun, and we will surprise the outlaws to-night in their retreat."

"Then you know where it is, Scout Cody?"

"Not exactly, but we will when Pinto comes in, as he will bring your late prisoner with him."

"Ah! you——"

"Had Pinto capture him after you set him free?"

"But one of them might have been killed."

"Oh, no, for I was there also, and Pinto landed him without any trouble, and I left him to bring him in—where they come now, and he will soon tell me, believing me to be Kennon, just how to find the outlaws' retreat, and then he can go on his way."

As Pinto came up with his prisoner, all but Buffalo Bill retired to the cabin.

"He's told me where the place is, chief," whispered the good-looking, half-breed boy, and, after a short conversation with the man, Buffalo Bill was assured that he had told the truth.

The outlaw had been securely blindfolded by the boy, so that he might not note the trail to the retreat, and Buffalo Bill had said:

"We shall leave you bound and blindfolded, my man, while we go as you direct us, and if you send us into a trap, that will end you."

"Act square and you can go your way with your horse, pack-animal well supplied, and will escape, while your outlaw companions will be hung."

The man swore to "act square," and under his guidance that night the outlaws' retreat was surprised, a few shots rang out, Scout Burgess fell dead, Lieutenant Danforth received a slight wound in the arm, and three prisoners were taken, while four lay dead upon the floor.

"A good night's work, and it closes up the band of White Navahoes, or will when these three are hanged," said Frank Danforth.

"Yes, and bitter foes have they been, for they were the leaders upon the fort when Major Wheeler was killed, and later upon your party, Lieutenant Danforth, under the guise of Indians, and using black arrows, endeavor-

ing to drive you from a foothold in this country, while they roused the Navahoes to attack you," said Buffalo Bill.

Then the prisoner, who had kept his part of the contract, was set free, vowing to lead a different life in the future.

All at Fort Dare were beginning to feel anxious about the long stay of Lieutenant Danforth, when one day he was reported by the sentinel to be coming.

He was not alone, and Scout Burgess was not with him, but instead the rescuer and one who seemed his double surely, while there was the half-breed boy known as Pinto, with three prisoners.

Then there were also two score horses, a dozen of them carrying packs.

The whole fort turned out to welcome the party, and, hastening through the crowd, Lieutenant Danforth, with his arm in a sling, led Buffalo Bill, Cecil Kennon and Pinto into the presence of Colonel Belden, remarking:

"This is Scout William F. Cody, Buffalo Bill, sir, and this is Mr. Cecil Kennon, and Miss Soulsby can now see that she was mistaken in our rescuer, though I do not wonder at it, while it was through Mr. Kennon that it was made possible for Cody to do the trick."

"This is Pinto, sir, who is to return with Scout Cody into the Northwest country, and himself become an army scout."

"But I leave Scout Cody and Mr. Kennon to tell their respective stories."

Later, after Lieutenant Danforth had withdrawn, Miss Soulsby entered the room with her aunt.

She looked first at Buffalo Bill, then at Cecil Kennon, and, walking up to the latter, put forth her hand and said:

"I was mistaken. I know you now, and——"

"Mr. Kennon has come to claim his own," said Buffalo Bill, in a low, earnest tone.

And then followed a joyous scene at Fort Dare, one that took form in the cloud of ill omen that had so long rested upon the fatal military post of Death Valley, the cloud driven away, the mystery solved by the presence of Buffalo Bill.

Cecil Kennon and Miss Soulsby were soon after married at the fort, but Lieutenant Danforth was not there to witness the ceremony, as through the kindness of his colonel he obtained a transfer to another regiment.

It was a hard blow to the young lieutenant, but he bore it bravely, and later married a Southern beauty, and had a most happy frontier home in Montana.

As for Buffalo Bill, his duty took him back to the Northwest, where he was to encounter many thrilling adventures.

TO BE CONTINUED.

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Send in your anecdotes at once, boys. We are going to publish all of the best ones during the progress of the contest.

We will have to reserve to ourselves the right of judging which anecdote has the most merit, but our readers know that they may depend upon Street & Smith and on their solute fairness and justice in conducting contests. This one will be no exception to the rule.

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Whether your contribution wins a prize or not, it stands a good chance of being published together with the name of the writer.

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During the progress of the Prize Contest for the best anecdotes sent in by our readers, this space will be devoted to the publication of those having the most merit.

We know what our readers can do, as the following anecdotes, which we have received from time to time, will show. So don't hesitate, but send in your articles as soon as possible.

A Boy's Ride With a Maniac.

(Written by Will Weston, 15 years old, of Waltham, Mass.)

I think there are not many readers of Buffalo Bill Weekly who would care to go through the experience which I had last week. I am the son of a stablekeeper of this city. On the day when speaking of, a well-dressed stranger called at the stable and asked for a horse and buggy, saying that he wanted to go to General —'s house in Weston, and he volunteered the information that his fiancée was visiting the general's home. He acted as guide and the ride began. All went well until the stranger, who held the reins, drove into the cemetery, mistaking it for the road leading into Weston.

As soon as he saw his error he gave a yell of horror and shed his horse into a gallop. On we dashed, leaving the carriage road and taking a course over a long line of graves. Every time the wheels struck a grave we were pitched forward, and it was only by the greatest luck that we were not thrown out. The maniac driver kept up his yelling, and the frightened horse continued his mad race. Twice our buggy was overturned, but the man, with superhuman strength, righted it and kept on. Two or three old gravestones were knocked down, and the doors to tombs were damaged by the hubs of the wheels. Finally the buggy was wrecked just outside of the cemetery, and I, nearly dead with fright, caught the horse and found my way back at one o'clock in the morning. The man who caused the trouble has been sent to the insane asylum at Westboro.

A Visit From a Lynx.

(Written by Frank Silver, 16 years old, of Denver, Col.)

A short time ago a lynx of immense size made an uninvited visit to Bill Neff's cabin, near Silverton, Colorado, on the Emerald River, where I was staying, and his sojourn was quite lengthy—in fact, Mr. Lynx is there yet. I was all alone in the cabin at the time. The animal was attracted by some meat that was hanging outside the door of the cabin. There was no lock or bolt to secure the opening, and while it was climbing up to reach the meat the door swung open and allowed the lynx to flounder in, where he proved a genuine surprise party to me, for I was whiling away the hours by reading tiger stories.

It was hard to tell which was the most surprised, the lynx or me, but the former evidently thought I meant business when it saw me reach for the ax and at once made a spring.

For several minutes we fought at close quarters, and at last broke away from the beast and climbed up on the sleeping bunk, where I could get elbow room to swing my ax. On came

the lynx, but missed his footing. This was my time. As the animal made another spring for the bunk I swung the ax aloft and brought down the pole on the skull of the animal with the usual "dull, sickening thud." The lynx dropped in a heap, and I came down from my perch to find that my blow had smashed the skull. The animal was stone dead. My clothes were torn in tatters, and the lynx weighed 150 pounds.

A Wonderful Snake Story.

(Written by Robt. Reed, 16 years old, of Topeka, Kansas.)

Ten years ago I lived with my father and mother on the banks of the Stranger River in Atchison County, Kansas. I was only six years of age, and one day my youthful fancy was caught by the pretty colors of a blacksnake. I pulled a small ring off my finger and a string out of my pocket. Placing the ring over the head of the snake, I started home in triumph, dragging the snake at my heels, and feeling as much a conqueror as the Roman emperor who dragged the captives behind his chariots. In climbing over a fence my captive made its escape. Ring, string, everything disappeared.

I shed a few tears at the time, but had forgotten the matter until this week, when I returned to the vicinity of my home in Atchison County. While crossing a small creek that flows into the Stranger River my attention was called by the barking of my dog to a strange something in a tree. I investigated and found there an immense blacksnake, fully ten feet long. Between the dog and myself, we succeeded in killing the snake, though I was obliged to use in the warfare both a club and a revolver. The dog finished the snake by giving it a shaking and tearing it in pieces.

You will hardly believe me, I know, but you can have my head if it wasn't the same identical snake that got away from me ten years ago. How do I know? Simple enough. That blacksnake still had the little silver ring around its neck.

A Terrible Ordeal.

(Written by Walter Johnson, 15 years old, of Fall River, Mass.)

There is a tall stand-pipe near South Park where the sprinkling carts load up, and the pressure from the pond at that point is something like a million pounds to the square inch.

Just what possessed me to climb that stand-pipe, while the band was playing gayly in the band stand, I don't know. Possibly I had found life too slow at the drinking fountain, and it may be that I didn't think I could do the stand-pipe any harm. At any rate, I shinned up and began monkeying with the cap on the top.

A full-grown man with steel appliances would undoubtedly

have experienced considerable difficulty in unfastening the cap, but I found it easy enough. My accomplishment will surprise me to the end of my days. I was bending directly over the pipe, stomach down, when the last thread of the cap screw was loosened.

There was a swish and a roar, and a million pound pressure sent a mighty volume of water a thousand feet into the air. It would have been a magnificent spectacle but for one feature of which I was told afterward froze the blood in the veins of the assembled multitude. As far as the eye could reach, and almost at the very top of this tower of water, a tiny speck slowly revolved. It was me, helpless and feebly waving my hands and feet in my terror. Fortunately, the tremendous force supported me, and the centrifugal power convexing toward the sides of the torrent, kept me in the middle. Anyway, that was what they told me afterward. It was wet work looking on, but for a few seconds nobody dared to move. Then a brave member of the Police Department recovered his presence of mind and darted to the Park House telephone. A little later the superintendent of the water works arrived on the scene, pale but determined.

The same thought seemed to inspire the crowd at the same moment, for five hundred voices exclaimed: "You must let him down easy."

The superintendent needed no such warning. He knew that to shut off the supply suddenly meant a terrible fall for me, who had ceased to move up there among the stars, and with a touch as light as a woman's, he began to turn back the swift tide in the main artery.

Inch by inch the tower of water diminished; inch by inch that small speck of humanity descended. The excitement was at concert pitch. Everybody spoke in hoarse whispers. Finally a joyous cheer rang out. I was thirty feet from the ground, and scores of arms were outstretched to receive me. "Stand steady," was the order, and the last spoonful of water was turned off, and I dropped safely into the network of hands.

An Encounter With a Bear.

(Written by Bert Monroe, 18 years old, of Helena, Montana.)

I would like to tell you about an encounter I had with five bears, in which I came out victorious. I am an enthusiastic hunter, and I pride myself on being a sure shot. Last fall I killed the largest bear that has ever been killed in this section, and I refused seventy-five dollars for the hide. I started out recently for St. Peter's Mission on a hunting expedition. My journey took me up toward the head of Milk River, and while not expecting it, I came face to face with a bear, which emerged from what afterwards proved to be a bear's den or lair. I succeeded in shooting the bear with my rifle, but I no sooner did so than another one appeared. I killed this one in the same way, and a third appeared. I killed this one also, and I was just about thinking that I was getting about all the bear I cared for in one day when number four appeared. This fellow I also killed, and I had only one cartridge left in my magazine. I needed the cartridge, too, for a fifth bear, larger than any of the other four, came out of his den and made for me. I fired my last shot, and though it probably hit bruin, it did not do the business, for he came straight at me. I did not have time to get another cartridge in the gun before the infuriated beast was on me. The animal made a slap at me which sent the useless gun flying out of my grasp, and I had just time to draw my hunting knife and give bruin an ugly cut in the throat. In doing this I received a severe squeeze from

the monster, and a fearful bite on the shoulder. Then I lost consciousness. It must have been only a few minutes, for when I came to again, my horse was between me and the bear. The bear was evidently hurt, for he was making a feeble attack upon the horse and was bleeding profusely from the wound in the throat. When the horse turned tail to his adversary and began to kick, the bear made off to the brush, leaving a trail of blood behind. I found that I had been hurt in the back and side, which had been terribly torn in my brief struggle. With difficulty I mounted my horse, which was not hurt, and rode two miles to a point where men were at work on a railroad grade of the Great Northern. From there I was taken to the Piegan agency. A party which went out the next day found the four bears which had been killed, and a trail of blood leading far as a stream, made by the fifth bear. The gun also was found where it had fallen.

Our Revenge.

(By Henry Sitges, New Orleans, La.)

Three boys were sitting on a coalbox in the city of New Orleans, La., on Exchange Alley, their respective names being Louis Knatzner, Charley Walter and Henry Sitges, the last one being myself.

Two hours before Charley had received a severe thrashing from a newsboy by the name of Jakey. Of course, we determined on having revenge, but how? that was the question. Jakey was always accompanied by two other newsboys as strong as himself.

Suddenly an idea forced itself through my cocoanut.

"Boys, I've got an idea," said I.

"Well, what is it?" growled Charley, who had not yet recovered his good nature.

"It is this," said I, and as I whispered a few words in the ears we jumped from the box and gave such a wild whoop that had a Comanche Indian been there he would have blushed.

"Now go home," said I, "and meet me here again in ten minutes."

They immediately started, and at the appointed time met me again in front of my home.

"Forward," said I, and off we tramped for Rampart street where we knew they usually passed to go to the Gaiety Theatre, and as soon as we got on Rampart street we armed ourselves with a belt, a dollar pistol, and a mask each.

Just then the city hall bell struck nine o'clock, p. m.

"Hist! they are coming!" said Louis, who had been on the watch.

"Quick! get ready," said I.

We crouched in a doorway, and just as they were passing we sprang upon them and bore them to the ground, and in less than two minutes they were bound hand and foot.

"Curse you! what do you mean?" cried Jakey and his two chums, who had not recognized us.

"It means this," said I, in a disguised voice, "that unless you promise us not to meddle with Henry Sitges, Charley Walter or Louis Knatzner, we'll blow your brains out."

"We promise," said the cowards, trembling with fear and rage.

We cut their bonds and gave them half-a-dozen kicks piece and said:

"If you are not at the end of the block before we count to we'll fire after you."

Suffice it to say that they safely got out of the block before we counted ten, and from that time we were never bothered by them any more.

BOYHOODS OF FAMOUS MEN.

We take pleasure in announcing a new department for **BUFFALO BILL WEEKLY**, in which we will present to our readers each week the story of the boyhood of some famous American.

Who shall we select to head the list, boys? Who, of all persons? Why, Buffalo Bill, of course, the peerless Knight of the Plains and the King of Bordermen. Read the fascinating account of his early career, as written by himself:

No. 1.—BUFFALO BILL.

Born in a pretty cabin home on the banks of the Mississippi River in the State of Iowa, over half a century ago, from my eighth year I was a boy pioneer, my father having set out with his family to seek a home in the then territory of Kansas.

That long journey, whatever discomforts it might have had for my parents and sisters, to me was the acme of delight, as I had my pony, gun and dog, Turk, and most dearly loved the trio.

On this trail I was rescued from an enraged buck I had wounded—my first deer—by Turk, a compliment I returned some days later when my faithful dog, overheated from a long chase, attempted to swim a rapid stream, and becoming chilled would have drowned had I not gone to his aid and brought him ashore.

Those days of travel, nights of camping, and the game that fell to my lot, I recall with pleasure even now.

When we reached the Missouri State line I had my first sight of a negro.

He grinned and gazed at me, while I was most serious, considerably awed, and gazed upon him with about the same surprise I would have experienced had I beheld an angel with wings.

But we soon got acquainted, though I still stood in awe of him.

When we reached Kansas my father established his home in beautiful Salt Creek Valley, near Fort Leavenworth, and from this spot I was to start upon my career as a border boy.

Here I beheld my first Indian. If not such a surprise to me as when I saw the negro, perhaps one that gave me a shock, for the tales I had been told of the red deeds of Mr. Lo were calculated to make me feel that distance would greatly enhance the view, on my part at least.

This same Indian later failed to inspire me with admiration on account of his honesty, for he stole my pony, and only an argument in which I had the logical side of the question, my rifle covering him, convinced him that I needed my horse a trifle more than he did.

His ready admission that I was right gave him a decided drop in my estimation and sent my self-conceit up correspondingly, although I had to confess that Turk was also a strong factor in regaining my pony.

At that time Kansas was greatly stirred over the attempted introduction of slavery into the territory and many a settlement was divided against itself.

Though desirous of taking no part in the struggle, my father, when forced to express an opinion, boldly stated his views, a circumstance that led to his being publicly attacked by a desperado, and his death later from the knife thrust then given him.

I was with him at the time and recall with pride that, boy though I was, I aided in my father's escape, and when he returned home, still a sufferer from his wound, I saved him from a gang of ruffians, who came, as they said, "to finish him."

We hid in a cornfield until the gang had searched and looted the house, to the great terror of my mother and my sisters.

The exposure, suffering as he was from his wound, undermined my father's strong constitution, and having to keep in hiding to save his life, the end was hastened, an end that left my mother and her family of little ones to struggle hard for existence against a cruel fate in a strange land.

Realizing the effort my mother would have to make to keep her home and rear her family unaided, I determined to "put my shoulder to the wheel" and lend a helping hand.

To do so I went to Leavenworth, some miles from our home, and the starting point for the overland freighters for the far West.

Reporting to Mr. Alexander Majors, the head and front of the many wagon freight trains, drawn by oxen, that had literally to fight their way through a hostile, almost unknown, country to carry supplies to the army, I boldly asked him to give me a position that would

enable me to aid in the support of my mother and sisters.

He looked me over with a smile—I was in my eleventh year only—and convinced that I was in earnest, told me to bring written permission from my mother and he would give me work.

My mother, finding I would not yield to persuasion, went with me to Mr. Majors, and with tears in her eyes saw me enrolled to do a man's work for a man's pay, that was, to serve as a messenger on the long trail, carrying orders from wagon train to wagon train, which marched from thirty to forty miles apart. That was my *debut* as a plainsman, and my first night out was spent on my blanket beneath a wagon.

Each wagon was hauled by half-a-dozen yokes of oxen, driven by one man who was known as a "bull-whacker," and whose whip crack could be heard a mile off.

The wagons were known as "prairie schooners," and each carried about 7,000 pounds of freight, and twenty-five of them comprised a train, over which there was a chief, his assistants, extra hand cavallard driver, who cared for the extra cattle, and the messengers.

Days of hardship, of storm and sunshine, and nights of danger and dread followed, as the train dragged its weary length along over trackless plains and mountains, swollen streams, and all the while vigil was kept against an attack from Indians.

It was a hard school for even a frontier boy; but it was a thorough one for the life that was to follow it.

It was when near Fort Kearney and at a noon-day halt that I had my first experience with hostile Indians.

They were unseen by us until they fired upon our camp, bringing down our three day herders on duty and stampeding our cattle while they attacked us.

It was a surprise and yet our men, old hands at such work, rallied at once; their rifle fire checked the Indians, though only for a while, as they outnumbered us ten to one, and more were coming into the fight.

With our horses and cattle stampeded, and an overwhelming force against us, there was but one thing to do and that was to retreat, and in that there was desperate danger.

Hence we made a feint attack upon the Indians, being thus enabled to reach the banks of the creek, carrying our wounded, as we waded the stream on our way to Fort Kearney.

At length we reached the Platte River, and here a raft was improvised on which to carry the wounded.

It was a hard task for all of us, and as night came on, lighted by a full moon, in spite of my efforts to "prove myself a man," I lagged behind.

I was worn out, and I believe half asleep when I sud-

denly awoke to a full realization of my danger at beholding the painted face and feather-adorned head of an Indian peering over the bank.

I was frightened, I admit, and made no effort at better acquaintance.

But I could not run in water knee deep, the moonlight revealed my foe, and it must be his life or mine I quickly realized.

I do not believe that the Indian saw me, but his eyes were upon my comrades some distance ahead, and I fired.

His death cry, as he toppled over into the stream, was echoed by many war cries from his comrades on the plain.

The men rushed back to me, and I was praised "for killing my first Indian," and as we hastened on the effect it had on me was to keep me from lagging behind again. It was long, very long before that Indian's death shriek ceased to echo in my ears.

It was a weary, half-starved band that arrived at Fort Kearney the next day; but I went with our men and an escort of cavalry back to our wrecked trains to find nothing left of it, for the cattle had run off with a herd of buffaloes and the Indians had taken what booty they could and burned the wagons, the loss falling upon the Government, which took the responsibility for such losses.

When I returned to Leavenworth with the remnant of our trainmen I was paid in silver for my two months' service, and it was indeed a proud moment when I poured every dollar of it into my mother's lap.

It is said that no man is a hero to his valet, but however true it may be, certain it is that I shone in a reflected light of heroism in my own home upon my return, and I am free to confess that I enjoyed it.

I was not long at home, for I again went with a wagon train to carry supplies to General Albert Sidney Johnson, commanding the United States Army sent to subdue the Mormons in Utah in the insurrection of 1857.

The train was a large one, and, on account of the double danger from Indians and Mormons, and the long trail, the pay was double.

Again I went as a messenger, and again we were to meet with disaster, after completing six hundred miles of the distance, and near Fort Bridger a halt was made on Green River in the Rocky Mountains, when we were surrounded and captured by a large force of Mormons, known as the "Avenging Angels."

Our lives were spared by the Danites, but the supplies and cattle were appropriated, while we took up our drear march for Fort Bridger, which we reached after daily dangers.

As two other trains had also been destroyed by the

mons and the men had gone to Fort Bridger, with winter coming on, all had to go upon short rations.

A terrible winter of suffering it was, firewood having been hauled miles, and the cattle slaughtered for food, and starvation was staring us in the face when a supply train arrived.

Arriving once more at my home, I found myself, at my mother's earnest request, metamorphosed from what I was pleased to consider a "veteran plainsman" into a schoolboy.

A desire to be truthful compels me to say I was not a great success as a scholar, and I recall very vividly that I came in close contact with the pedagogue's switch as almost daily well-deserved incentive to more study and less mischief.

A dog fight, in which my canine comrade, Turk, was mixer, a pretty girl, older than myself, and a rival, were the causes that led to an abrupt termination of my early school days, as I fled the scene of learning to once again study in the harder school of rough experience.

A note the pedagogue sent by my sister to my mother did not compliment me in the smallest degree—in fact, just the contrary, for I was dismissed and held up before the school as a frightful example of what "sweethearts" and "fighting dogs" might bring a boy to in the end.

From thence on it seemed that I was destined for an adventurous life upon the border, and although it kept me much away from home, I had the satisfaction of knowing that the money I earned greatly aided my mother and sisters.

Later I returned to duty in the West and went with the United States freight caravans transporting supplies to Fort Laramie, and again entered upon a life of Indian warfare.

It was on the Laramie Trail that I killed a huge buffalo, and in doing so saved the life of a little girl, an immigrant's daughter, who was in the path of the enraged brute.

Arriving at Fort Laramie, I was once more put upon the Pony Express Trail as a rider, taking a run of twenty-six miles, from Red Buttes, on the North Platte, to Three Crossings, on the Sweetwater.

It was while on this trail that I made the longest run in the Pony Express Riders' record, doubling my run of twenty-six miles, and in the place of a wounded comrade, taking his turn—a continuous ride of three hundred and twenty-two miles—and riding twenty-one hours in making it.

From that time on events of interest and excitement crowded fast into my life, and I felt that I was living in times and among people that were making history.

It was in 1863, while I was absent from home, that my

loved mother passed away, leaving to me her blessing. With her death my home ties were, in a measure, broken, and thereafter I became indeed a plainsman, event following event in my life in rapid succession, thus shaping my future career.

Incidents that were as strange as fiction and romance crowded into everyday life, and with the close of the Civil War the Wild West became the theatre of busy action, and my service led me to become scout and guide in the United States Army.

In such capacity I met the distinguished leaders of the Civil War—Sherman, Sheridan, Miles, Crook, Gibbon, Merritt, Carr, and many more of that dashing, splendid corps of generals and Indian fighters.

In those days of border warfare I met men who will ever live in history and whom I am proud to remember were my friends.

My first meeting with the lamented Custer was a striking one, for he came upon me with an escort of but ten men on their way from Fort Elsworth to Fort Hayes.

I informed the general that they were cut off by a band of Indians, and his hope of escape lay in a rapid flank movement.

"Lead and we follow you, scout," he tersely said, and I was fortunate in taking the party through to Fort Hayes.

As the general was on his way to Fort Larned and needed a guide, he requested that I be sent with him, an honor I appreciated.

I reported to him the next morning, mounted upon a mule whose good qualities I well knew.

General Custer eyed the mule suspiciously and asked:

"Do you think, Cody, that vehicle of yours can stand the strain?"

I assured him that the mule would lead him into Larned, and the general told me to set him in motion, yet he looked doubtful as he said so.

Off we started, and the general's thoroughbred and the picked horses of the escort kept my mule guessing for nearly a score of miles, and I confess to having been a trifle anxious.

"Put on more steam, Cody!" said the general, and my mule acted as though he understood what was said, for he slipped along at a pace that told on the general's thoroughbred and the horses of the escort before another twenty miles had been told off!

"Cody, that animal is a glutton for going, and permit me to say that his rider travels as an Indian does—by instinct—for you follow no trails!"

I was pleased at the compliment from such a source, and more so in behalf of my mule, for he led the way into Larned with a very tired string of horseflesh following him.

"Cody, that vehicle is a wonder, I must admit, and you guided us straight as the crow flies!

"If you are ever out of a job report to me—and bring your quadruped!"

That night I returned alone on my mule, ran upon an Indian camp, dismounted to reconnoitre, saw they were a party to avoid, and when I retraced my way to remount, was greeted with a bray of welcome like a fog-horn from my "vehicle," as General Custer had called my mount, with two redskins striving to force him along.

A shot settled the dispute for one brave, the other fled, and mounting my mule, I set him going at a pace that would have won Custer's heart could he have seen him.

I reached Fort Hayes before dawn, and from that day the mule's name was Custer, and he was classed as a thoroughbred.

Later I saw much of General Custer, whose soldier's death all know, and it was during the campaign against Sitting Bull in 1876, I accepted a challenge from Chief Yellow Hand to meet him in a prairie duel. It was fought in full view of General Merritt's command, and the army of redskins.

The chief fell by my hand, and I got his scalp and war bonnet—the first scalp to avenge Custer's death.

In this campaign were General Miles, Merritt and Crook, as well as the lamented Custer.

As many stories have been told of how I got my soubriquet of Buffalo Bill, it may be as well for me to here state that I first shot a match with Bill Comstock, known as the "Champion Buffalo Hunter of the Plains," and in the run killed sixty-nine buffalo to his forty-eight, thus taking the champion's title from him.

When the Kansas Pacific Railroad was rapidly pushing its way westward, I was employed at five hundred dollars a month to kill buffaloes for the workmen.

During the time I was thus engaged I killed more than four thousand buffalo, and the men, becoming tired of the meat, gave me the name of Buffalo Bill, and appeared to hate the sight of me, my buffalo hunting horse Brigham, and my rifle that I had given the cognomen of Lucretia Borgia.

In a campaign under General Carr in a fight with the Sioux under the great Chief Tall Bull, it occurred to me that if the redskin leader was killed it would be half the battle gained, and I set out to accomplish the work.

I dropped the chief from his saddle, and his horse ran into our lines and was captured, while the disheartened braves at once retreated.

A curious incident in this connection was the capture of Chief Tall Bull's widow some days later, and, instead of feeling revengeful toward me, she rather felt pride in

the fact that her husband had fallen by the hand of Pa-e-has-ka—Long Hair—as the Indians called me.

As memory delves deep into an almost buried past, recollections of stirring events force themselves upon me with an almost overwhelming rush, and I find it hard to stem the flood tide of reminiscences of life on the frontier and its many strange characters that made up an existence and happenings possible in no other land than ours.

Around that Land of the Setting Sun dwells a glame of romance and daring deeds that naturally have lure impetuous youth to seek to emulate the heroes circumstances have made of many men who wore the blue and men who wore the buckskin, and hence some of the aspirants have fallen victims to their zeal.

But has not the sea held the same charm and glame of romance and been the field of daring deeds, thus also claiming its too willing victims?

The history of our land and its defenders, of the sea and its mariners, have been tinged with a romance that makes very pleasant reading, and the further time removes us from the days of '76, of 1812, of '46, the Civil War, the deeds of the Western pioneers and men in buckskin, and the Indian, in my opinion, the greater will be the interest clinging about them.

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